

Policy Title:	Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Policy
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Governing Body:	Southern Oregon University	Policy Number:	FAD.026
Policy Contact:	Sustainability and Recycling Manager	Date Revised:	July 2021
Custodial Office:	Finance & Administration	Date Approved:	August 2021
Approved By:	President	Next Review:	
Related Policy:			

Revision History

Revision Number:	Change:	Date:
	Green Purchasing Policy	April 2010
1	Revision - title change and content changes including restructuring into policy and procedure	July 2021

A. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to align SOU’s purchasing decisions with its vision, mission, and values for sustainability as well as equity, diversity, and inclusion. The products and services used on a daily basis on campus have an impact on the environment, community, and economy across their entire life cycle, from manufacture and design to end of life. This policy is designed to set out what is required of SOU employees who purchase products and services to ensure that all purchasing decisions embody, demonstrate, promote, and encourage SOU’s commitments to sustainability as well as equity, diversity, and inclusion.

SOU is committed to socially-responsible procurement and promoting social equity through our contracts and purchasing. We work to ensure fair and lawful procurements, environmentally-sustainable solutions, and utilization of minority- as well as women- and service disabled veteran-owned businesses in the university’s purchasing, procurements, and contracts.

The policy intends to promote purchasing products and services from manufacturers and vendors who share the University’s commitment to environmental stewardship and social equity; support innovation opportunities and the local economy; and encourage transparency and accountability for purchasing decisions.

This policy applies to all products and services, including food, purchased by SOU and extends across their entire life cycle to ensure consideration is given to the vendors from which we purchase goods and services, the extraction of resources, design, and manufacture through to the use and end of life management of the product or service.

B. Definitions

Sustainable (Green) Purchasing - The method by which environmental and social considerations are considered in relation to price, availability, and performance criteria to make purchasing decisions. Also known as “environmentally-preferred purchasing” (EPP), green procurement, affirmative procurement, eco-procurement, and environmentally-responsible purchasing. Sustainable (Green) purchasing minimizes negative environmental and social effects through the use of environmentally friendly products. Green purchasing attempts to identify and reduce environmental impact and to maximize resource efficiency.

Bio-Based Products - Products or raw materials that are derived from sustainable, primarily plant sources.

Post-Consumer Recycled Content - Material collected after consumer use and used to make new products. For example, post-consumer recycled content paper is made from paper that has been reclaimed through the recycling process.

Life Cycle - Refers to a product in its entirety: the resources it is made of, the resources used in its production, the energy used in transporting the product, how the product is used, and what happens to the product at the end of its life.

Environmentally Preferable Product - A product that has a reduced negative effect or increased positive effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products that serve the same purpose. This comparison may consider raw materials acquisition, production, fabrication, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, and disposal of the product. This term includes, but is not limited to, recyclable products, recycled products, and reusable products.

Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) - MBE is a business certification of company ownership and diversity. Generally, this certification requires that the company is at least 51% owned and controlled by a member of a minority group such as Black American, Native American, Asian-Pacific American, Subcontinent Asian American, Hispanic American or other socially disadvantaged group. MBE certifications are usually issued by the state government.

Women Business Enterprise (WBE)- WBE is a business certification of company ownership and diversity. Generally, this certification requires that the company is at least 51% owned and controlled by a woman or women. WBE certifications are usually issued by the state government.

Service Disabled Veteran Business (SDV) - SDV is a business certification of company ownership and diversity which designates that a company is owned and operated by a veteran

who suffered a disability while in the military service. Additionally, it requires that the company is at least 51% owned, operated and controlled by a service disabled veteran. SDV certifications are usually issued by the state government.

C. Policy Statement

1. To the extent possible, all purchases of products and services by SOU employees must align with SOU's values and strategic goals for sustainability and social equity. This will be done by:

- Incorporating sustainability and social equity criteria in SOU's purchasing evaluations;
- Responsible consumption through: elimination of single use items, prioritizing reusable and durable items, and giving consideration to the amounts and types of materials to help keep them circulating in the economy and diverting them from the landfill;
- Purchasing from vendors and manufacturers who share the University's commitment to environmental stewardship and social equity;
- Selecting vendors and suppliers with MBE, WBE, SDV certifications;
- Stimulating innovation to support sustainable products and services;
- Supporting the local economy;
- Purchasing products and services that use water and energy efficiently;
- Taking into account greenhouse gas emissions across their entire life cycle and making sure the product or service is resilient to changes in the climate.

2. SOU employees must consult, rely upon, and consider the guidance set forth in "Section C1 Sustainability Evaluation" portion of the *Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Procedure: Evaluation and Specific Requirements* [[LINK](#)] as a guide for all products and services to ensure that decisions around purchasing take into account environmental impact and social equity.

SOU employees must complete "Section C1 Sustainability Evaluation" in the *Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Procedure: Evaluation and Specific Requirements* [[LINK](#)] for all contracts, agreements, and purchases for products and services above \$25,000 to demonstrate and make sure that purchasing decisions have taken sustainability of the product or service into account.

SOU employees must follow "Section C2 Specific requirements for selected products and services" in the *Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Procedure: Evaluation and Specific Requirements* [[LINK](#)] for all listed products and services, at any scale and cost.

3. Exceptions to the Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Policy may be requested and are subject to approval from the Vice President of Finance and Administration. Such requests should be submitted to SOU's Contracts Administrative Officer, who will include their recommendation and forward the requests to the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

4. All purchasing card holders and all budget authorities must read and understand the requirements of SOU's Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Policy and associated procedures.

5. Policies and procedures for other campus operations will impact the implementation of SOU's Sustainable (equity and environment) and associated procedures. These operations include, but are not limited to: general business contracting, personal services contracts, dining services, integrated pest management, landscape management, green cleaning, maintenance, renovation and construction, material and waste management, and vehicle and fleet management. These operations must follow SOU's Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Policy and associated procedures.

This policy may be revised at any time without notice. All revisions supersede prior policy and are effective immediately upon approval.

D. Policy Consultation

Information Technology, Facilities Management & Planning, Environmental Health & Safety, Sustainability Council, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Leadership, Executive Cabinet, Faculty Senate, Business Affairs Council, Student Affairs Committee and Policy Council. Policy was posted for community comment on August 3, 2021.

E. Other Information

1. Applicability of the Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Procedure: Evaluation and Specific Requirements

The policy statement above sets out the requirements for procurement of certain products and services, including the requirement that employees familiarize themselves with and apply the separate *Sustainability and Equity in Purchasing Procedure: Evaluation and Specific Requirements* [\[LINK\]](#) before making applicable purchases. The specific requirements include, but are not limited to, products and services in the following categories:

- Consumable office products (e.g., paper, toner cartridges, binders, batteries, desk accessories, pens and pencils, notebooks, lamps, and envelopes);
- Durable consumables (e.g., furniture, IT equipment, other electric powered equipment, appliances, and audiovisual equipment);
- Chemicals and toxins (e.g., products used for building and facilities maintenance, cleaning and landscape management);
- Food services;
- Business-related services (e.g., consultants)
- Garments and linens;
- Professional service providers (e.g., architectural, engineering, and public relations);
- Transportation and fuels;
- Maintenance, renovation, and construction.

2. Implementation and Measuring Performance

SOU reports on its equity, diversity, and inclusion progress regularly and its sustainability credentials at a national level. Performance of the implementation of this policy will be monitored and measured for reporting purposes.

3. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Comprehensive Procurement Guideline Program

The Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (CPG) program is part of EPA's Sustainable Materials Management initiative that promotes a system approach to reducing materials use and the associated environmental impacts over the materials' entire life cycle. A key component of the CPG program is EPA's list of designated products and the accompanying recommendations for recovered content, both post-consumer material content and/or total recovered material content. This includes construction, landscaping and office products.

<https://www.epa.gov/smm/comprehensive-procurement-guideline-cpg-program>

4. Contracting with Businesses Owned by Socially Disadvantaged Groups

In the state of Oregon, the Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) certifies businesses owned by socially disadvantaged groups, including those with MBE, WBE, SDV certifications. COBID maintains a searchable Certified Vendor Directory to assist individuals with identifying vendors meeting the specific criteria necessary for certification.

<https://www.oregon4biz.com/How-We-Can-Help/>

The Policy Contact, defined above, will write and maintain the procedures related to this policy and these procedures will be made available within the Custodial Office.